

Online learning is a must for our children. We know COVID-19, according to all the experts, may not be the last time that we are faced with such a pandemic. There are some predicting that there could come another, maybe not in my lifetime but maybe in yours. We must be prepared.

So, I am hopeful that this infrastructure bill that we move through this body will not just be traditional but will be looking to the future so we can have the kind of legislation that will prepare our children and grandchildren for a world that we hope they will be competitive in.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. Hopefully, we can have that debate and work together to achieve that vision for the future as we are dealing with the problems of today and our infrastructure needs for today, but also do it in a fiscally responsible way. I think that is what the two sides, especially in the Senate, are looking at.

I still haven't gotten an indication, specifically, as it deals with some kind of reconciliation bill that may or may not come to the floor. Hopefully, it is not some attempt to raise taxes and do things that would undermine our economy, our competitiveness, and our ability to create more opportunities for people to achieve the American Dream by entering into the workforce and ultimately moving their way up and having their own opportunities as well, which would be undermined with higher taxes.

If that part of the equation gets brought in, clearly, that changes the dynamic. But, hopefully, we stick to the traditional infrastructure needs that you and I would both agree need to be met. Hopefully, we can find a path to get there together. That is what we will be working toward in the week ahead.

Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman has nothing else, I am prepared to yield back.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I don't have anything else. I thank the gentleman for allowing me to stand in here today.

I say to him that I would hope that as we go forward with this discussion, we will look at this whole issue as the title of the bill indicates: Invest in America. When we make investments, financial investments, the money may leave our coffers, but it comes back sometimes tenfold.

So there is a big difference between raising taxes and making investments.

Mr. SCALISE. Hopefully, we can keep that difference in mind.

I appreciate the gentleman filling in, and we will see the gentleman from Maryland back soon enough and maybe even moving a little faster than before. I am not going to challenge him to a race because he would defeat me in that.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from South Carolina, and I yield back the balance of my time.

RECOMMITTING ON JUNETEENTH

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, on June 19, 1865, freedom finally came for the last enslaved African Americans in the United States when Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, more than 2 years after President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

Today, 156 years later, President Biden will be signing a law to make Juneteenth a new Federal holiday. It is a cause for celebration. It should also serve as an occasion for learning and for this country to reflect on our history and recommit to doing the vital work to ensure that the lasting effects of slavery, bigotry, and racism are replaced with hope, dignity, and equality for all.

We can start with the Senate passing the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, legislation to reform policing and address systemic racism and bias within law enforcement, and finally making the John Lewis Voting Rights Act a law, passing it.

Today, we celebrate this historic designation of Juneteenth as a Federal holiday. Tomorrow, we get back to work.

BIDEN INFLATION

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the hidden tax that is plaguing hardworking Americans. This hidden tax is inflation.

Under President Biden, we have seen the largest spike in 13 years, with consumer prices surging 5 percent in May. Core inflation rose at its fastest pace since 1992.

American families are being forced to pay more for the products that they need. Gasoline is 56.2 percent more expensive today than 12 months ago. Transportation services have increased 11.2 percent. Together, food and energy prices have increased 3.8 percent. Even used cars and truck prices have increased 29.7 percent.

Yet, Democrats rammed through a trillion-dollar package that is crushing small businesses and hurting hardworking American families by incentivizing Americans to stay at home and not get back to work. We are currently down 7.6 million jobs from our pre-pandemic levels. Our inflation is rising because of President Biden's far-left tax-and-spend proposals.

Americans cannot afford the Biden inflation tax. We know wasteful government spending will not solve this crisis, no matter how many times President Biden and the Democrats propose it.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ANITA EHLERS

(Mr. CASTEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Anita Ehlers, a constituent member of the Barrington, Illinois, community I represent and, more importantly, a friend.

I never knew Anita when she didn't have cancer. But for a long time, I didn't know that she did. She just never let it define who she was.

I knew her as a wonderfully kind, hardworking woman who was committed to making the world a better place.

Our Speaker often reminds us: "We don't agonize. We organize." Every time she says it, I see Anita's face in my head.

I never saw her feel sorry for herself. Every time I was with her, it seemed like all the thoughts in her head were on how to make the world a little better for everybody else: her husband, Gregg; her daughters, Julia and Lindsay; her friends and neighbors; me and all the folks she was motivating.

As a women's marcher, a climate protector, an ally for the LBGT community, a universal health coverage champion, a union member, a teacher, and a lung cancer support advocate, she never agonized. She organized.

The world, and our district, is a sadder place without her. But I take inspiration because she always made our community a better place.

May we all find the strength to follow her example, to make the world around us a little easier for everybody else, no matter the adversity that we may personally face.

1200

PREPARATIONS TO EVACUATE AFGHAN INTERPRETERS

(Mr. MEIJER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MEIJER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the dire situation of our interpreters in Afghanistan, where we are over halfway through our planned withdrawal. Meanwhile, almost 20,000 Afghans who worked with U.S. forces are anxiously awaiting special immigrant visa approval, a process that can take years. Making matters worse, our Kabul Embassy suspended visa operations last week due to a surge in COVID cases.

Mr. Speaker, President Biden must immediately start preparations to evacuate those Afghans to Guam to safely await visa approval. My colleagues and I on the Honoring our Promises Working Group urged the administration to do so 2 weeks ago, but we have yet to hear back. This is unacceptable.

President Biden ended the remain in Mexico for economic migrants but insists on a remain in Afghanistan policy